

## Friday Night — Session One (February 17—7:30-9:30pm)

### Intermediate Level, Week 15 Abraham Living a Simple Life of Faith

Point to Emphasize: We should be those that live a life that is simple, just following God.

Reference Reading: Genesis 12:1-8

Memory Verse: For we walk by **faith**, not by appearance. (2 Corinthians 5:7)

#### Story Sample

Two weeks ago we talked about God calling Abraham, and last week we talked about how he responded to God's call. Now this week we would like to talk to you about what kind of living Abraham had after he began to follow God. God had promised him that He would lead Abraham to a land He had chosen, and would even make a great nation of him, blessing him greatly. So Abraham began to travel to the land God had promised.

When Abraham came to a place called Shechem, at the oak of Moreh, God appeared to him again. Once again, He promised Abraham that he would give him a land. Do you know what Abraham did? He built an altar. Do you know what an altar is? It is a place to worship God. So the first thing he did after God spoke to him was to build an altar. Before he did anything else, he worshipped God. He put God before everything else, even himself. He didn't start by building a house, or getting a job, or going to the store. He set every worry about his living aside and only worshipped the one true God.

Many people will say it is foolish to worship only God. Some of the people I love very much will say to me, "Are you going to ANOTHER meeting? Wouldn't you rather go to the movies or a ball game with us?" They think I'm crazy to go to so many meetings. Do you have this happen with your friends too? Well, I'll tell you, I would much rather go to a meeting any day! I love to be with all of God's people!

Then later, after worshipping God, Abraham pitched a tent. He didn't build a brick building or even a tower like they had in Babel. He knew he wouldn't stay in the same place for long. So he built a tent. When you go camping, do you take a tent with you? That's because you know it will only be for a short time. And Abraham knew that he would not want to get too settled because he was following God, wherever He went! This was a very simple life—a life of faith. He believed God would lead him wherever He wanted Abraham to be. Nothing was as important as living this life of faith. Wherever he traveled, he would build altars and pitch his tent. He never cared for more than that, just going where God was going.

I also know people who ask me why I don't care so much about a new car, or a fancy house, or the best job ever. But you know what? Those things would just make my life so complicated! I wouldn't have time or the money to spend on what God wants. What about you? Would you rather spend all your allowance so you could have the BEST shoes, or the NEWEST video games, or spend all your time with friends who don't love God, or just simply love God and His people? *[Draw the children into a discussion about things that complicate their lives.]* I would rather have a simple life of praising God and living by faith to follow Him.

## Saturday Morning — Session Two (February 18—9:00-11:00am)

### Intermediate Level, Week 17 Abraham Allowing Lot to Choose First

Point to Emphasize: We can let the younger ones to have the first choice.

Reference Reading: Genesis 13: 5-18

Memory Verse: Let no one seek his own profit, but that of the other. (1 Corinthians 10:24)

#### Story Sample

Abraham had become very rich in livestock. He had flocks, herds, tents, and herdsmen to look after them. Lot, his nephew, also had flocks, herds, tents, and herdsmen. There was no longer enough pasture, water, and space for all. The herdsmen of Abraham and the herdsmen of Lot began to argue with each other. When Lot's herdsmen took his sheep to one pasture, Abraham's sheep were already there. And when Abraham's herdsmen took his herds to drink at a certain pool, Lot's herds were already there. These herdsmen were fighting with each other over the pastures and the available water. There was just not enough for all to share. Something had to be done. Someone needed to settle the matter of which herds belonged where.

Now, in a lot of families, when there is a decision to be made, the oldest is the one to make the final decision. And the oldest also gets the first choice. When I was a child, we would have big family gatherings once a year. At that time, our grandparents, uncles, aunts, and cousins all got together. There were at least forty of us. We usually met at a big park and ate a big meal together. There were always lots of great desserts, too. But the children were not first in line for desserts. It went from oldest to youngest. The oldest always got the first choice. My grandmother's lemon meringue pies were always gone by the time I went through the line because that was what the older ones liked best. Being one of the youngest, I was lucky if I got any pie at all. *[Storyteller, tell you story of the oldest getting the first choice.]*

It often is the oldest one who gets the first choice. So, we might expect Abraham to settle the problem by choosing the best land for himself and leaving Lot the land that was less desirable. But Abraham was not like this. Though he was older than Lot, he nevertheless let Lot have the first choice. He let the younger choose first. And so Lot chose what he thought was the better land.

Now, I need to ask you, when you are with younger ones, who gets the first pick from the cookie plate? Who gets to choose first in a game? Probably, it is you, the older one. Sometimes we take advantage of being the oldest and choose the best for ourselves. The younger ones get ignored or are given the last choice. But I hope that the next time you are with younger ones you will remember that Abraham let the younger one go first. And, like Abraham, you will let the younger ones get the first choice or be able to choose first in a game. I am sure that as the older one, you will consider the younger ones' feelings and allow them to be first.

## Saturday Morning — Session Three (February 18—11:00-1:00pm)

### Advanced Level, Week 17 Abraham—Not Being Attracted By Earthly Gain

Point to Emphasize: We must not be attracted by earthly gain.

Reference Reading: Genesis 14:1-17, 21-24, footnotes 23<sup>1</sup>; 15:1

Memory Verse: Let your way of life be without the love of money, being satisfied with the things which are at hand... (Hebrews 13:5a)

#### Story Sample

What is your reaction when you find something on the bench at the park? Or, let's say you are walking on the sidewalk and you see money lying on the ground. Do you immediately take it and put it in your pocket before someone sees you? Do you believe in the phrase "Finders keepers, losers weepers?" It means that if someone finds something, they are entitled to keep it even if it belongs to someone else. *[Let the children answer and discuss with the children what they think.]*

When I was growing up, my favorite chore was getting the clothes out of the dryer. Sometimes I would find money that my dad had left in his pants pockets! I would not tell anyone and keep it for myself. One day my dad noticed he was missing some money. I felt terrible. I went to my dad and returned the money. We had a good conversation about what it meant to keep something that does not belong to you. *[Storyteller, insert a short story of being attracted to earthly gains.]*

In Genesis chapter fourteen, there is a story of someone who refused to be attracted by earthly gain. There was a war where four kings fought against five kings. The four kings won the war. In this war, the city of Sodom was taken captive. At that time Lot was also in the city and was captured as well.

When Abraham heard that Lot was taken captive, he led his three hundred and eighteen men to pursue the kings who had won the war. He brought back all the possessions and all the people that were taken captive, including Lot. The king of Sodom was so grateful that he offered Abraham all of the goods that were taken forcefully from Sodom.

If you were Abraham, what would you have done? Would you have kept the goods offered to you? Maybe not everything, but at least some of them? Abraham could have said, "That is right and fair. I rescued your people and recovered everything that you lost. It is good that you have your people back and that everything else should be mine." Abraham was not like that. Abraham was pure. He was not attracted by earthly gains. Abraham did not take ANY of the king's goods for himself. Abraham's response was, "I have lifted up my hand to Jehovah, God the Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth" (Genesis 14:22). By saying this, Abraham was saying that God has no lack, everything is His. And as such, He will provide everything that you need.

These days, there are a lot of entertainment shows where people take home prizes and win lots of money. It is easy to be caught up in the desire to have more than what we need. Even at your age, you can be attracted to the things that money can buy. Some people waste their whole life in treasuring money and possessions. The Bible tells us that it is impossible for someone who loves money to love God. Abraham knew God, and he knew that God would take care of his every need. We can also make the decision today to be the same as Abraham, not loving earthly gain but loving God who will provide all that we need.

## Saturday Night — Session Four (February 18—7:30-9:30pm)

### Intermediate Level, Week 18

#### Abraham—the Friend of God

Point to Emphasize: We can talk to God as our friend.

Reference Reading: Genesis 18

Memory Verse: And Abraham...was called the friend of God. (James 2:23)

#### Story Sample

One day, Abraham was sitting in the door of his tent during the heat of the day, and he saw three men approaching. They were just normal men, so at first, Abraham did not realize that one of them was actually God Himself, or that the other two were angels. He just saw three guests approaching his tent, so he ran out to greet them. He was such a good host. He offered them water and food and a chance to wash their feet and take a little rest. The men accepted Abraham's offer, so he, Sarah, and their servants prepared some meat, milk, and cakes for them. Abraham brought the food out to the men, and they ate it and talked with him.

As they talked, Abraham began to realize that these men were very special, that one of them was God. Abraham was sitting outside of his home, eating and talking with God! He wasn't scared or shy, because God had appeared as a normal man. If God were to appear to you as the Mighty All-powerful God, wouldn't you be a little scared? I would be! If He came with all His power and glory, I would feel really uncomfortable and shy. God knows we might feel like that, but since He really wanted to sit and talk with Abraham, He appeared as a normal man. Because of that, Abraham could sit and talk to God the same way he would have talked to a friend. In the Bible, Abraham is even called the friend of God!

We can be the friends of God, too. We may know that we can pray to the Lord when we are in trouble or sad, but that isn't all. We can tell Him when we are happy, mad, scared, or excited. We can tell Him about our day, about how we are feeling, or about anything else. Don't you like to talk to your friends? And don't you like it when your friends talk to you? We can talk to God just like that too! We can talk to Him while we are doing our homework or riding in the car. We can talk to Him during the school day or when we're out running errands with our parents. *[Storyteller, insert your own story about talking to God. Then write on the board "I can talk to God when I'm \_\_\_\_\_" and have the kids give examples to fill in the blank (happy, mad, etc.).]*

We can talk to God any time, any place, and we can tell Him anything. He wants to hear! He is our friend! The more you talk to someone, the better friends you become. It is the same with our God, the more we talk to Him, the closer friends we become.

**Lord's Day — Session Five (February 19—9:30-12:30pm)**

**Elementary Level, Week 19  
Rebekah—Being Kind and Diligent**

Point to Emphasize: We can be those like Rebekah who are kind and diligent.

Reference Reading: Genesis 24

Memory Verse: And be kind to one another, tenderhearted... (Ephesians 4:32a)

Story Sample:

Last Week 1we learned that Abraham wanted to find a wife for his son Isaac. He told his servant to travel a great distance back to the land of his relatives to look for a wife among his people. The servant did as Abraham requested. He looked to God to lead him to the right young woman and God was faithful. For many weeks the servant traveled through the desert back to Abraham's homeland.

In this land lived a young woman by the name of Rebekah. She was the granddaughter of Abraham's brother. The Bible tells us the story when the servant met Rebekah for the first time. We will see how Rebekah was the perfect wife for Isaac. Rebekah was kind and diligent.

Rebekah went to draw water from a well as she always did. Before she came to the well, Abraham's servant was already there. The servant asked Rebekah for a drink from her pitcher of water. She immediately gave it to him and then generously drew water from the well for all of his camels. It was hard work for her to draw water for ten camels to drink, but she willingly offered to do it. She was so kind to take care of this servant and his many camels.

Today if we want water, we go to the refrigerator or we go and grab a water bottle, right? In those days, you needed to go to the well to draw water from a well and then take it home. Rebekah was very considerate and generous. She not only drew water for her own use, but also for Abraham's servant and for all his camels as well!

If you look closely, you will see that what Rebekah did was amazing! She was only asked to do one thing. But, she not only did the one thing, she did another thing for him! And the second thing she did required much more effort than the first! She was kind, considerate and generous! She did beyond what she was asked!

I remember the many times when my mom called me to do something for her. She asked me to pick up my notebook and crayons from the dining table as we were about to eat. Sometimes, it was hard to obey. But sometimes, I would willingly go and do it. Even more, when she called me to pick up my things, do you know what I would do? I would not only pick up my things, but I would pick up my sister's things that were on the table as well. I would then help my mom set the table! I was not asked to do all of that, but I would do it willingly as I knew how busy she was preparing the food for us to eat. I was being kind and considerate towards my mom, just like Rebekah! *[Storyteller, insert your own example.]*

Abraham's servant found the best wife for Isaac. She was truly the best match for him. Rebekah was one of the relatives of Abraham. She was not sloppy; rather, she was diligent, kind, generous and considerate, doing beyond what she was asked to do. She cooperated with what the servant and Abraham wanted and followed the arrangement of her family. Ultimately, she went with the servant willingly and married Isaac. Isaac surely got the best wife!

This story of Rebekah really makes me want to be such a person who is kind and diligent and that at the end makes the best choice.

## Lord's Day — Session Five (February 19—9:30-12:30pm)

### Advanced Level, Week 19 Abraham—Losing Years of God's Presence

Point to Emphasize: We must know what displeases our parents and God.

Reference Reading: Genesis 12:1-7; 17:1, 15-19, 24; 18:1-12; 21:1-6

Memory Verse: Therefore also we are determined...to gain the honor of being well pleasing to Him.  
(2 Corinthians 5:9)

#### Story Sample

When Abraham moved to Hebron, he began to have a very close association with Jehovah. He and Jehovah spoke to each other as friends. It was during this time that Jehovah spoke to him about two very important matters: the coming birth of Isaac and the destruction of Sodom. In this story, we will talk about the birth of Abraham's son, Isaac.

The first time that Jehovah appeared to Abraham to speak about his having a son was when he was 75 years old. It is pretty incredible that at 75 years old anyone would still be able to have children. We know that people lived longer during these times, and it was more common to have children at such an age. When Abraham was even older than this, at 99 years old, Jehovah confirmed that he and Sarah would have a son. A lot of things happened in Abraham's story between the age of 75 and 99. Some were good and pleasant things, while other things were defeats and failures. One of Abraham's failures displeased Jehovah so much that He did not visit or speak to Abraham for 13 years! That was very serious. Abraham lost 13 years of having God's presence. *[There is no need to tell the children how Abraham lost God's speaking for 13 years. If a child asks, simply say, "When you really displease God, it is better not to speak about such shameful things."]*

When I was about 12 years old, my good friend did something that really displeased his father. My friend had been told by his father to go and get his hair cut. His father did not like his boys to have long hair like girls. My friend always let his hair grow as long as he possibly could before getting it cut the way his father wanted. One-time, my friend decided that he was no longer going to get his hair cut short. He was going to let it grow down to his shoulders. So that was what he did. At this point, his father quit talking to him. During their dinner, his father would never speak to him. He would only talk with the other children. They would all ride in the car together but his father only spoke to the others. My friend was doing something that clearly displeased his father and his father showed his displeasure by not talking to him. What my friend did was really sad. He cared more for his hairstyle than he did for his dad. He got his long hair like he wanted, but he lost his good relationship with his dad. *[If you don't have a personal story of your own, you can tell this story in third person.]*

Even at your age, you know that there are many things you could do which would displease your parents. *[Lead the children into a discussion about some things that parents might be displeased with—e.g. stealing, smoking, foul language, inappropriate jokes, bullying...]* Just think, how displeased your folks would be if they saw or heard you doing such things? They would be very displeased. You should decide now not to be involved with anything that would displease your parents. Instead, talk to them about the pressure you feel to be like those around you.

Jehovah was very displeased with Abraham. By not speaking to Abraham for 13 years, He showed how displeased He was. But our God is so merciful and forgiving! He came again to Abraham and restored His relationship with Abraham. So, when Abraham was 99 years old, Jehovah was again confirming that he and Sarah would have a son by the next year. Upon hearing this, Abraham fell on his face and laughed and said in his heart, "Will a child be born to a man who is a hundred years old? And will Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?" (Genesis 17:17). Later, when Sarah heard Jehovah speak about this, she too laughed within herself. Even at Abraham's time, this seemed an impossibility! No couple this OLD could have a child.

It is striking that both Abraham and Sarah laughed. They laughed not at God but they laughed thinking what He had said was impossible with them. This situation was altogether like that of a person visiting in a friend's home. This really shows how close they were to Jehovah.

Isaac was born when Abraham was 100 years old. And Sarah said, "God has made me laugh; everyone who hears will laugh with me" (21:5).

It's so good that Abraham was restored to God and that his situation became so pleasant with God. But remember, Abraham lost God's presence for 13 years, because he did something that displeased God. This is just as my friend lost the close relationship with his father. We have to consider when we do things. Is it worth losing the close, pleasant relationship we have with our parents? I think you will really agree with me that nothing is worth losing that.